

## **Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 92**

### **RESOLUTION CHAPTER 52**

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 92—Relative to the Associated Chaplains in California State Service.

[Filed with Secretary of State May 30, 2008.]

#### **LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

SCR 92, Perata. Associated Chaplains in California State Service.

This measure would commend 41 years of professional service by the Associated Chaplains in California State Service in assisting chaplains in implementing religious programming and training within the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, the State Department of Developmental Services, the State Department of Mental Health, and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

WHEREAS, The First Amendment of the United States Constitution assures the free exercise of religion; and

WHEREAS, The California Constitution also guarantees the exercise of religious freedom without discrimination or preference; and

WHEREAS, United States Supreme Court decisions affirm that institutionalized persons should be enabled to practice the religion of their choice; and

WHEREAS, Chaplains in state service manage and direct all religious programming within juvenile and adult facilities, prisons, developmental centers, hospitals, and assisted living facilities operated by the state, and invite the active assistance of staff members in each institution as essential elements in the success of every religious program; and

WHEREAS, Chaplains in state service are ordained or licensed, and endorsed by associated religious bodies that require a high standard of confidentiality in their work; and

WHEREAS, Substantial positive public benefits result from religious practice and programming within state juvenile facilities, prisons, developmental centers, hospitals, mental health and veterans hospitals and assisted living centers operated by the state Department of Veterans Affairs; these benefits include reduced stress levels within the institutions and improved institutional performance by reducing conflicts and violence; and

WHEREAS, Addressing spiritual needs of inmates and patients who are confined in juvenile facilities or state prisons or who reside in developmental centers, and hospitals presents unique challenges to the public officers, chaplains, and religious groups; and

WHEREAS, Special relationships exist between the larger community and the unique environment in juvenile facilities, state prisons, state hospitals, and state care facilities; and

WHEREAS, The exercise of professionalism and confidentiality is an essential aspect of the relationship between family members, wards, prisoners, clients, patients, and staff; and

WHEREAS, Chaplains' contacts with family members and volunteers in the community play an important role in the spiritual health of wards, prisoners, clients, and patients; and

WHEREAS, The Associated Chaplains in California State Service ("ACCSS") was established in 1967; and

WHEREAS, ACCSS is the recognized professional training organization that provides service to the departments of the executive branch of government in cooperation with faith communities, and, for 40 years has provided yearly training conferences and other opportunities for professional training and growth of chaplains; and

WHEREAS, ACCSS remains committed to the continued spiritual and professional support of our chaplains as they seek to improve the welfare of wards, prisoners, patients, clients, and employees of state institutions; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring*, That the Legislature commends 41 years of professional service by the Associated Chaplains in California State Service in assisting chaplains in implementing religious programming and training within the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, the State Department of Developmental Services, the State Department of Mental Health, and the Department of Veterans Affairs; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.